

Person-Centered Principles

As part of the technical assistance provided by NCAPPS, the Human Services Research Institute prepared a [national overview of person-centered principles](#). The main principles that emerged help define person-centered thinking, planning and practice:

Community Inclusion

People must have full access to the community and be treated with dignity and respect.

Availability of Services and Supports

People should have access to an array of individualized services that meet their needs.

Focus on the Person

The person is at the center of the planning process. The person's desires should be heard, honored, valued and reflected in the services received. People who are important in the person's life should be part of the planning process.

Choice and Self-Determination

People should make choices (with support if needed and wanted) about services and supports as well as decisions regarding their own health, well-being and life goals.

North Dakota Person-Centered Guiding Principles

- 1 **Emphasize Person First, with Customized Supports and Services**
- 2 **Focus on the Person's Strengths**
- 3 **Balance Choice and Risk**
- 4 **Meet the Person Where They Are**
- 5 **Regularly Review Goals**
- 6 **Build Equity of Voice**
- 7 **Equip the Person to Make Informed Decisions**
- 8 **Be Kind**

North Dakota PCP Guiding Principles Details

- 1. Emphasize Person First, with Customized Supports and Services** – The person directs their plan and is at the center of the planning process, rather than the conditions/diagnosis, agency, or system. The person's desires and experiences should be heard, honored, prioritized, and reflected in the services received. People who are important in the person's life should be part of the planning process, helping to ensure the person's vision for their life is realized.
- 2. Focus on the Person's Strengths** – Recognize the individual's positive attributes and what they can or hope to do. Listen to the person and those who know them well, to understand their talents, unique skills, gifts, competencies, and sources of pride. Utilize and build upon the person's strengths to support them in realizing their desires and to develop/enrich life-long skills.
- 3. Balance Choice and Risk** – Show dignity and respect by identifying what is important to and for the person. What's important to the person is usually related to comfort, happiness, contentment, satisfaction, and often revolves around what is critical to maintain the individual's health and safety. People have the right to take risks which are essential for dignity and self-esteem, to learn from mistakes, and grow through these learning opportunities.
- 4. Meet the Person Where They Are** – Seek to understand the person's values, beliefs, culture, and community to foster appreciation and respect for how the individual feels, works, and lives their life. This includes acknowledging how a person's past experiences impact their life today. To ensure a person's vision for their life is realized, listen to their story with humility. Humility—which is about personal reflection and being open to and thoughtful about other peoples' experiences—should be shared by everyone participating in the service process, including those receiving and providing services or supports. Many cultures see health, well-being, and community as one in the same. Respect and compassion for all people as valued community members are integral to success of the whole. Acknowledge cultural similarities and embrace the differences, but do not impose beliefs and values on others.
- 5. Regularly Review Goals** – Recognize that desires and needs evolve over time and may change. Take the time to review the person's life goals to ensure that supports and services are designed to help realize the person's vision for their life is imperative. Supports and services should be flexible, and any changes/updates made timely.
- 6. Build Equity of Voice** – Empower the person to actively participate and make decisions that are consistent with their goals and values and support the individual's voice. Create equity in engagement by reaching out to people who may not traditionally be engaged in self- and system-advocacy, and make sure underrepresented groups feel welcome and supported to engage.
- 7. Equip the Person to Make Informed Decisions** – Clearly explain what options, education, and choices may be available to the person. Ensure that the person understands the options and has all necessary information, including potential benefits and consequences, to make informed decisions.
- 8. Be Kind** – Take the time to show genuine care, concern, and compassion. This builds trust and ensures that quality services and supports are being fulfilled based on the individual's needs and desires.